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MEETING WITH PRESIDENT THIEU, APRIL 24, 1972

TROOP WITHDRAWAL

1. President Nixon plans to announce during a brief talk at 9:00 p. m. on Wednesday evening, April 26, Washington time (10:00 a. m., Thursday, April 27, Saigon time) that we will withdraw an additional 20,000 troops by July 1. General Abrams will have flexibility as to when he wishes to withdraw men during this period. We believe that this will provide us with the maximum political flexibility while maintaining military capabilities at an acceptable level. It is important, in sustaining strong support for our efforts on your behalf, to maintain the momentum of the troop withdrawal program. Our ability to withdraw ground forces in the face of an all-out offensive by the North Vietnamese will contribute greatly to public confidence in the U. S. in the Vietnamization program.

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